

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 180925Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6974

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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TAGS: RP, NO, AU, UK, ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: LABOR UNDERSECRETARY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT
EUROPEAN LABOR MARKET

REF: MANILA 9337 (NOTAL

SUMMARY. LABOR UNDERSECRETARY INCIONG IS GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR FILIPINO LABOR IN EUROPE, DESPITE TEMPORARY SETBACK IN UK. AGREEMENT FOR RECRUITMENT OF FILIPINO NURSES SIGNED IN VIENNA, AND SIMILAR NEGOTIATIONS FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL UNDERWAY IN WEST GERMANY. UNDER NEW LABOR CODE, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WILL CONTROL RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT OF FILIPINO WORKERS AND SEAMEN OVERSEAS EFFECTIVE NOV. 1. EXPORT OF SURPLUS LABOR RECEIVES HIGH PRIORITY ATTENTION AS A MAJOR SOURCE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR GOP. END SUMMARY

1. LABOR UNDERSECRETARY AMADO INCIONG, JUST RETURNED FROM 5-WEEK SWING THROUGH EUROPE INCLUDING STOPS OSLO, GENEVA, VIENNA AND LONDON, IS GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR FILIPINO LABOR IN EUROPE. IN STATEMENT RELEASED SEPT 16, HE RE-
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PORTED SIGNING OF VERY ATTRACTIVE 3-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH

VIENNA CITY GOVERNMENT FOR RECRUITMENT OF FILIPINO NURSES. SIMILAR NEGOTIATIONS ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS ARE BEING CONDUCTED WITH WEST GERMANY (WHICH REPORTEDLY ALREADY HAS SOME 7000 FILIPINO NURSES) AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN AUSTRIA FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF FILIPINO NURSES, MIDWIVES, MEDICAL TECHNICIANS AND "OTHER WORKERS".

2. INCIONG RECOMMENDED IN HIS STATEMENT THAT GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY TAKE OVER RECRUITMENT FOR JOBS UN UK AS CONSEQUENCE OF TEMPORARY BRITISH BAN ON FILIPINO WORKERS. RECRUITMENT OF FILIPINO WORKERS FOR HOTEL WORK AND OTHER JOBS HAS APPARENTLY BEEN BANNED FOLLOWING GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HIRING TERMS AND CONDITIONS. ONLY EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENT NURSES IS CURRENTLY ALLOWED. INCIONG WENT ON TO URGE NEGOTIATION OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT LABOR RECRUITMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE UK. INCIONG ALSO TOLD LABATT SEPT 16 HE HAD BEEN SHOCKED TO LEARN OF SCANDALOUS SHENANIGANS BY PRIVATE AGENCIES WHICH HAD RECRUITED FILIPINOS FOR UK.

3. INCIONG FOUND NORWAY INTERLUDE MOST WORTHWHILE AND HAS HOPES FILIPINO WORKERS CAN BREAK INTO OFFSHORE OIL LABOR MARKET. HE MOST APPRECIATIVE COURTESIES EXTENDED BY LABATT OLSON.

4. COMMENT: UNDER NEW LABOR CODE, OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT BOARD DUE TO COMMENCE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT OF SURPLUS FILIPINO LABOR EFFECTIVE NOV. 1. OFTEN UNSCRUPULOUS FEE-CHARGING PRIVATE AGENCIES TO BE GRADUALLY PHASED OUT. A NATIONAL SEAMEN BOARD WILL PERFORM SAME FUNCTION IN MARITIME FIELD AS PHILIPPINES BECOMING AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF SEAMEN FOR WORLD SHIPPING.

5. EXPORT OF SURPLUS LABOR RECEIVES HIGH PRIORITY ATTENTION AS A MAJOR SOURCE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR GOP. LABOR SECRETARY OPLE HAS TOLD EMBASSY THAT HE CALCULATED ABOUT \$100 MILLION--MOSTLY FROM THE U.S.--WERE SENT HOME IN 1973 BY AN ESTIMATED 35,000 FILIPINOS EMPLOYED OVERSEAS. ALTHOUGH BALANCE OF PAYMENTS STATISTICS INDICATE OPLE'S ESTIMATE IS TOO LARGE, REMITTANCES FROM OVERSEAS WORKERS PROVIDE IMPORTANT AND GROWING BOOST TO PHILIPPINE FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS.

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